



FAITH vs. KNOWLEDGE.

BY THE

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Christ, the Light of the World.

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Lecture.

FAITH vs. KNOWLEDGE.

YOU have been called as a witness in a court of law. You understand the whole case. Your evidence cannot be shaken, and will settle the matter without any possibility of doubt. Your confidence in your forthcoming testimony is the effect of absolute certainty that you are in possession of facts, and know the facts.

In this way you have often reasoned with yourself and with others. The hour arrives, and you are in the witness-box. How long has the cross-examination continued before your testimony has become confused, and faith in your supposed facts begun to waver? You speedily leave the court-room, deeply chagrined, and perhaps hopelessly sceptical, where before you were so positive and self-assured. As the realm of certainty became more and more circumscribed, belief, or actual doubt, was seen to occupy the vacated territory, and litigation in the court of consciousness became a fact as real as the litigation in the court of law.

You are a student of facts and phenomena, and you seek to explain your mental confusion. You carefully

note what stood the test in that cross-examination, and what added nothing as evidence before the court. A critical examination of the senses and reason, as sources of knowledge and vouchers in their own right for its unqualified and absolute correctness, was the result. You learned that the mind has its special faculties, as the body has its special organs, and that nature has determined each to its legitimate sphere of action. As the eye is not destined to perform the duties of the hand, neither are the senses to assume the functions of the mind. You thus trained yourself to draw a clear distinction between sense and intellect.

You had not yet reached the end of your problem, nor of your difficulties. You found reason and consciousness furnishing you with principle and fact, and presenting you with conclusions and inferences, both deductive and inductive. You congratulated yourself on the greatness of the conquest, and the stability and perpetuity of your intellectual empire. A breath of criticism again turned your science into a creed. Reason in her deep stronghold was summoned to explain and vindicate her right to royalty. On what ground rests her imperial claims? What witnesses can she call? How settle contradictory testimony whose claims are equally balanced? Powerless against so many, so antagonistic and so deeply-seated forces, you have supplicated foreign aid. This mental confusion must be reduced to a minimum, or continued intellectual and spiritual unrest must be the consequence. Are there no schools that have as yet found

a balm for mental distraction and a wounded conscience? Most certainly there are, and divided into hostile camps, as your reason is divided against itself. "Believe that you may understand," says one; "Understand that you may believe," replies the other. "Accept only what is rational," says one; "Accept only the irrational," shouts another. To one faith is the highest and only authority; to another it is but secondary and subservient to reason. With some an all-absorbing faith has found only mystery everywhere, and with a religious zeal devoid of knowledge they have taken at a single gulp, without mastication and consequent impossibility of digestion, infinite contradictions and numberless absurdities. With intellectual pride, the offspring of irreligious tendencies, others scorn all recognition of the claims of the faith faculty, and proceed to weave out of the *a priori* depths of their unfathomable intellect a rational universe constructed on the only plan possible, and find at the close of their labored effort that neither that universe nor themselves hath any being.

Intellectual confusion, absolute nonentity, or an Agnosticism, first-born son to despair, seem to be the necessary outcome of the unwarrantable severance of faith and reason. These two God hath joined together, and man has neither the privilege nor the power to put them asunder.

We need not seek, then, in objective sources or historic names an answer that shall unify and harmonize the myriad voices within us. The soil on which the

questions grew must, when analyzed, explain its own productions. If faith and reason are in the last analysis found to be one and inseparable, the accumulated stores of knowledge must be their joint production.

Fifteen hundred years ago Clement of Alexandria uttered the great truth: "There is no faith without knowledge, nor is there knowledge without faith." Every cognition, whether of empirical or rational origin, involves both faith and knowledge. Without faith in the utterances of sense and reason all physical and intellectual activity must cease, or aimlessly and unproductively perpetuate an unmeaning and irrational history. Faith in the declaration of the eyes that a missile is aimed at our head enables us to ward off the blow. Faith in the great law of Causality carries human enterprise and research through many a realm that would otherwise be unexplored; while the final revelation of the coveted secret adds a new province to our intellectual empire, and justifies our confidence in the unseen laws that operate in the depths of our mental nature. Faith in the great laws of the indestructibility of matter, and the conservation of energy, transformed, transferred, but not destroyed, lies at the basis of all modern chemistry and physics. No man hath seen the law at any time; the sciences born of the law have confirmed its *a priori* utterance. Faith in the perpetuity of the established order of things, and faith in each other, are foremost among the motive forces that drive the

wheels of commercial industry, and give us our fair heritage of social law and order.

“The Godhead in us wrings our nobler deeds
From our reluctant selves.”

Faith in the deep mysterious utterances of the soul, and faith in a living God, have covered the universe with altars of sacrifice, and inspired the missionary zeal and Christian heroism of all these centuries. And finally, faith in ourselves, in our mission, and in Him who hath called us thereto, has been the ever-fruitful source of strength to nerve the arm, to inspire the mind, and to energize the will. A Credo, “I believe,” underlies all practical activity, all science, and all theology.

“O welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel, girl with golden wings.”

But is all this faith without knowledge? By no means. All faith entitled to the name contains an element of knowledge. No greater leap into darkness was ever taken than when any doctrine is accepted with no evidence or knowledge for its defence. “A belief, to be rational, must have rational grounds. When held without grounds it is a volition; when held on irrational grounds it is a prejudice or a superstition.” Faith, knowledge, in brief the simplest mental fact, whatever may be its nature, will in the last analysis be always found to be at least a duality in some form. Says the eloquent Henry Rogers: “We

would represent Reason and Faith as twin-born : the one in form and features the image of manly beauty ; the other, of feminine grace and gentleness ; but to each of whom, alas ! is allotted a sad privation. While the bright eyes of Reason are full of piercing and restless intelligence, his ear is closed to sound ; and while Faith has an ear of exquisite delicacy, on her sightless orbs, as she lifts them toward heaven, the sunbeams play in vain. Hand in hand the brother and sister, in all mutual love, pursue their way, through a world on which, like ours, day breaks and night falls alternate ; by day the eyes of Reason are the guide of Faith, and by night the ear of Faith is the guide of Reason. As is wont with those who labor under these privations respectively, Reason is apt to be eager, impetuous, impatient of that instruction which his infirmity will not permit him readily to apprehend ; while Faith, gentle and docile, is ever willing to listen to the voice by which alone truth and wisdom can effectually reach her."

Says another : "The eyes of Reason are the eyes of Nature, and the eyes of Nature cannot see into that which is beyond or above Nature. Reason sees from Nature to Nature. Faith sees from God to God. Reason eyes Divine truth as an infant an egg—all shell ; Faith pierces the shell and perceives the bird of paradise, abiding its time with folded wings and closed eyes within its house of defence."

It is generally assumed that faith characterizes theology and the religious life only, while knowledge

especially belongs to the physical and mathematical sciences.

No greater delusion has ever been entertained. would not be altogether incorrect to say that the more a science has to do with the material and tangible, the more marked is the element of faith, as giving support to its fundamental principles.

There is something significant in the fact that the Decalogue has never needed revision; and that the Mosaic account of creation by the free act of a person God is the objective point toward which physical science, by many a devious route, is tending. Christ, as Stewart and Tait have said, "must be regarded as doing for ethics incomparably more than Newton did for physics. So completely did He grasp its fundamental principles, that ever since His day the science has been mainly deductive, and very much confined to a practical application of the great maxims which were given to the world more than eighteen centuries ago. . . . Ethical science is already forever completed, so far as her general outline and main principles are concerned, and has been, as it were, waiting for physical science to come up with her." A Divine revelation, you say, and not a scientific discovery. Wait a moment. The Old Testament cosmogony and Old and New Testament ethics find an echo in the depths of reason—an echo so like the original that the scientific basis of each is found within ourselves. We thus stand face to face with eternal verities and unalterable principles of action. Faith is here so intimate

wedded to reason, and reason so one with faith, that separation from each other or from ourselves becomes impossible in act and unphilosophical in thought.

Material existences and physical forces, as such, have not for us this intimate and kindred relationship. Their lines of action and reaction are open to the eyes of sense, but make no part of our consciousness in the same manner as does an ethical or rational law. Faith in an unvarying principle and definite results is thus to an extent disturbed. Hypothesis, conjecture, theory, are introduced until there is nothing left as a hunting-ground even for the poetic imagination. A wag defined a philanthropist as "a man whose charity increases directly as the square of the distance"; and the application of the term faith to much that is called science is equally appropriate.

"Rational principles, the facts of consciousness and immediate perception, are all that can claim to be strictly called knowledge." But what does this imply? It implies that an infinitely larger territory, to which the proud name of science is too often exclusively appropriated, has substituted faith for knowledge, and has, in a moment of mental aberration, lost the distinction between principle and hypothesis. A principle, as such, is always rational, and is the *a priori* condition of fact or phenomenon. Ultimate, unalterable, self-evident to the human reason, they have their basal reality in the eternal and unchangeable reason of God. An hypothesis is but a prop upon which we lean to thread our way through interacting and sometimes

apparently contradictory phenomena. If we merge into sunlight the hypothesis lays aside its tentative character; mental discord ceases, and our checkered experience thus becomes the agency—not the cause—through which truth and principle have unfolded themselves as abiding realities.

We say “agency, not cause,” for the cause is that realm of rational reality that “the vulture’s eye hath not seen nor the lion’s whelp trodden;” that reveals itself to no eye of sense, but apprehending which we take hold of fundamental being—God. And so Plato says: “Those who see the absolute, and eternal, and immutable, may be said to know, and not to have opinion only.”

In illustration of our position that, strictly speaking, truth or knowledge is revealed to the eye of reason rather than to the eye of sense, notice for a moment the hypotheses concerning the ultimate nature of matter. What is it? From the days of the Greek Atomists, and even earlier, until the present an effort has been made to answer this question. Each answer has been but an hypothesis to explain the phenomena and give to them a rational harmony. The atomic theory, the vortex-atom theory, the theory of infinite divisibility, the theory of Boscovich, where all idea of substance vanishes and you have left merely a geometrical point as a centre of force, and many others each to-day claiming for itself a hearing, and each in turn, even by professional scientists, denounced as wholly wrong or absolutely absurd, all reveal that finality

has not been reached even in that with which we are most familiar.

Prof. Bowne says: "Were the natural sciences restricted to what is truly known they would shrivel up to a handful of unrelated facts, of much value for practice but of little or none for intelligence."

We thus see how largely the physical sciences rest upon hypotheses, assumed principles—in other words, upon faith, and yet further, a faith not always even rational. Individual facts, infinite in number and variety, are known and turned to practical account; but correctly speaking, that only is science where the fact is a deduction from a principle, and the principle a law asserting itself with distinctness and clearness through the reason. And so Herbert Spencer says: "Positive knowledge"—that is, conscious, sensible experience—"does not, and never can, fill the whole region of possible thought. At the utmost reach of discovery there arises, and ever must arise, the question, What lies beyond?" And again: "An entire history of anything must include its appearance out of the imperceptible and its disappearance into the imperceptible. Be it a single object or the whole universe, any account which begins with it in a concrete form is incomplete, since there remains an era of its knowable existence undescribed and unexplained. . . . Knowledge has obviously not reached its limits until it has united the past, present, and future histories into a whole."

Physical phenomena, sense, experience, are thus seen

to be not ultimate in themselves. An intellectual theory must be constructed as the invisible framework upon which the whole structure rests. Without such framework nothing but dismembered and fragmentary phenomena appear and disappear, conveying in themselves no information as to their origin, offering no explanation of the present, and uttering no prophecy as to their future. Dwelling only in the realm of the tangible, the concrete, and calling this science, calls to mind the utterance of the prophet Isaiah: "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes, the prophets; and your heads, the seers, hath he covered. And all vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned."

Reason is eternal, and the true aim in all scientific culture should ever be to lead us from the phenomenal and temporal to the absolute and unconditioned, the universal Reason—God. These laws are modes of the Divine activity, and to that extent, in the unalterable and fundamental principles there revealed, they make known to us that highest Personality, embodying in Himself life and light and love. "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Let us turn now to mathematics, supposed to be the most absolute and most completely apprehended of all the so-called sciences. Its formulæ, its laws, its axioms, are always expressed in the present tense, as though the element of time in no way affected their truthfulness. There are no antagonistic schools in mathematics, and, speaking generally, no "*isms*." There may be different views on the psychological question as to how we come into possession of the principles—whether by the agency of the senses or the reason, or both—but as to their absolute authority there is a consensus of opinion. (We can hardly accept with seriousness the utterance of John Stuart Mill, *Essays by a Barrister*, and a very few others, that there may be a world where it is neither inconceivable nor absurd that $2 + 2$ would equal 5. They have very wisely not applied such mathematics to our world of debtor and creditor.) But what mathematician ever stood face to face with the principles which lead him through the solution of a problem? The problem grew out of time and circumstance. The principles that give to it a solution are *above* all time and circumstance. The problem was concrete, tangible. The principles reveal themselves to the eye of reason, but as concrete realities they refuse all fellowship with the senses.

Faith in reason's imperial utterances in the unseen and eternal again crowds itself to the fore, and we find that if the term knowledge is to be applied only to that which is sensuous, strictly speaking there can be no knowledge whatever, and still less can there be

any science. It is yet further evident, that if knowledge or science rest only upon what can be demonstrated, neither can be reached. Foundation principles or laws cannot be demonstrated, but are themselves the *basis* of all demonstration, and faith is more or less involved in our acceptance of them.

Jevons, in his "Principles of Science," remarks: "Some of the most extensive calculations ever made were those required for the reduction of the measurements executed in the course of the trigonometrical survey of Great Britain. The calculations arising out of the principal triangulation occupied twenty calculators during three or four years, in the course of which the computers had to solve simultaneous equations involving seventy-seven unknown quantities. The reduction of the levellings required the solution of a system of ninety-one equations. But these vast calculations present no approach whatever to what would be requisite for the complete treatment of any one physical problem. . . . The problems which are solved in our mathematical books consist of a small selection of those which happen, from peculiar considerations, to be solvable." In what do all these unknown quantities, equations, etc., finally take root? Not in concrete realities revealed to us through bodily senses, for they tell of a realm of reality that infinitely transcends all sensuous experience. The elements of universality and necessity involved cannot be explained by individual facts and experiences. Perhaps the utterance of an ancient volume may, after all, be found to contain

an element of truth; and its statement, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," may be interpreted to mean, that through our reason we read somewhat of the nature of God and of the laws and methods of the Divine working. "He is their source and foundation; and they, in turn, are the fixed modes of His manifestation."

"But," says the objector, "no man hath seen God at any time." Quite true; and the man who believes only in what he sees, may, with others, doubt the existence of his own brains. We never see one another. "The senses never reveal the person," says Dr. Flint; "our knowledge of God is obtained as simply and naturally as our knowledge of our fellow-men. It is obtained, in fact, mainly in the same way,—the Father in heaven is known just as a father on earth is known. The latter is as unseen as the former. No human being has ever really seen another. No sense has will, or wisdom, or goodness for its object. Man must infer the existence of his fellow-men, for he can have no immediate perception of it. He must become acquainted with their characters through the use of his intelligence, because character cannot be heard with the ear, or looked upon with the eye, or touched with the finger. Yet a child is not long in learning that a spirit is near it. As soon as it knows itself, it easily detects a spirit like its own, yet other than itself, when the signs of a spirit's activity are presented to it."

"Strange doctrine," you say. Yes; but perfectly

analogous in this regard to the physical sciences. You suppose the universe called material lies at our very door; that it asserts its independent existence with most indubitable evidence; and that our knowledge of it is quite exhaustive. Not so, however, the leading scientists. It is a charge gravely brought against idealistic philosophers, that they in their metaphysical abstractions have got so far away from the world of concrete reality that they alone either deny its existence or claim that we have little or no knowledge of it. John Stuart Mill was an enthusiastic student of physical science, and yet the material universe was to him but "the permanent possibility of producing sensations." Alexander Bain is to-day no tyro in such subjects, and yet he gives as the conclusion of the whole matter the following: "The arguments for the two substances"—matter and mind—"have, we believe, now entirely lost their validity; they are no longer compatible with ascertained science and clear thinking. The one substance, with two sets of properties, two sides, the physical and the mental—a double-faced unity—would appear to comply with all the exigencies of the case." "Both professedly metaphysicians," you say. Yes; but both of the empirical school, and so more likely to be advocates of the material side of things. But turn to those who are not metaphysicians by profession, but physicists.

Stewart and Tait, in their celebrated work, "The Unseen Universe," say: "Matter is—though it may sound paradoxical to say so—the less important half

of the material of the physical universe." And again: "But, before discussing what is that *something else* besides stuff, which has an *objective* though not a *substantive* existence, let us in the first place inquire into the grounds of our belief that matter itself has a real existence external to us; that, in fact, the so-called evidence of our senses is not a mere delusion." Then follows an attempted proof of the existence of the material universe of which they are the professional expounders.

Not yet satisfied? What says Huxley, *facile princeps* in this department of study? In his "Lay Sermons," p. 327, he says: "Whatever matter may be in itself, all that we can know of it is under the shape of a bundle of our own consciousness. Nor is the knowledge of anything we know or feel more or less than a knowledge of states of consciousness." Huxley says somewhere: "Logical consequences are the scarecrows of fools;" but in charity let us not indulge in drawing any while we are left in so great doubt as to the existence of either the scarecrow or the fool.

Here we are brought around again to the same conclusion—all that we know is enclosed within a very small circle; while what we believe, or the realm of faith, even in physical science, is a territory, compared with the former, almost infinitely great.

It will doubtless be concluded that not alone in metaphysics and theology is the faith faculty called into requisition. It could, we think, be easily shown that they, *less* than all other sciences, lay that faculty

under contribution ; that there is more and stronger evidence to prove the entity of the soul than can be summoned to the defence of a physical atom ; and that the doctrine of the Divine existence can be more fully sustained than can that of a material universe.

Nothing lies nearer to us than the facts of consciousness, be those facts merely phenomenal of the ego, or be they the oracular utterances of reason. In the latter case we are introduced immediately into a realm of law and reality, touching all phases of existence, all time, and all space. But law in itself is an abstraction, and as such has no substantive character. Law, like force, is a consequence, having reality for its antecedent ; and the nature of the law is a revelation of the nature of the reality of which the law is an expression. In the depths of our being mysterious processes are ever going on. It is only by analysis and reflection that we reach anything approaching a correct apprehension of their significance. If all the laws and modes of action of our marvellously complex intellectual life were expressed in one single law and by one word, "Causality" would claim the highest title to such royal distinction. It is, perhaps, not too much to say, that in some form or manifestation the law of causality reveals itself in every intellectual operation. It is, however, with its primitive or fundamental character that we are at present most deeply concerned. In that primitive character it asserts the personality, and consequent spirituality, of the ego. "The ever-changing phenomena that each one is conscious of so necessarily

presupposes an unchanging ego or self to sustain and connect them, that one cannot, even when one tries the experiment, conceive them appearing and the transcendent ego not existing." (Fraser's Berkely, p. xii.) At the same time, the relative or dependent character of the ego is declared, and upon the same high authority. In the presence of the relatively true, beautiful, and good, and of its own personality, it asserts the existence of an absolute Being and Personality, the final and uniting ground of all truth, and consequently of all dependent forms of existence or being—

"Whose kingdom is where time and space are not."

In this primitive and spontaneous utterance of our intellectual life the great mass of humanity always remains. Strangers to reflection they are equally strangers to doubt, and are put to confusion with the endless logomachy of the schools. In the language of Cousin, here is a "primitive affirmation which implies no negation. . . . Reflection is the theatre of the combat which reason engages in with itself, with doubt, sophism, and error. But above reflection is a sphere of light and peace, where reason perceives truth without returning on itself, for the sole reason that truth is truth, and because God has made the reason to perceive it, as He has made the eye to see and the ear to hear." Here in the deep recesses of the soul man communes with that other Ego of whom we are each the image, and we know Him as

"Life continuous, Being unimpaired;
That hath been, is, and where it was and is
There shall endure,—existence unexposed
To the blind walk of mortal accident;
From diminution safe, and weakening age."

In these depths, untrodden by the senses, consecrated only to the service of reason and the moral life, are laid the foundations of all that can with any warrant be called science. Observation, methods of experiment, the whole history of speculative thought, have but confirmed these fundamental utterances; in every instance, it may be, enlarging the field of knowledge, but never making more extended the realm of truth, and always confirming our faith in those rational principles that so project all our thought into the unseen. Truth—science—is found, not made.

Reflection—study—is then the fruit of the forbidden tree? Let Tennyson answer:—

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes
Are tender over drowning flies,
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew
In many a subtle question versed,
Who touched a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true:

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he bent his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them: thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own;
And Power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,
As over Sinai's peaks of old,
While Israel made their gods of gold,
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

—*In Memoriam*, Canto xevi.

We thus see that we need intellectual muscle as well as physical, for there will as assuredly be days of struggle and conflict in the mental as in the material phases of life. But doubt, for the mere purpose of encouraging and engendering scepticism, is something quite different from that which merely suspends the judgment until the evidence on all sides has been duly considered. The last is both eminently philosophical and scriptural.

What, then, is the nature of faith, and what its province in relation to knowledge?

We will endeavor to answer the two questions together. Our view could, however, be readily inferred from preceding statements. I have always thought it somewhat anomalous that works on mental philosophy give little or no place to a consideration of the faith faculty. It is surely entitled to a discussion equally with, if not more than, some others, because of its dis-

tinctive characteristics and its far-reaching consequences. In works on theology it has been given undue prominence, and too frequently made to do service where a little philosophy would not have lessened the value of theology as a science, although a death-blow might thus be struck to the advocacy of some special creed. It has thus come to pass that professional theologians have too little regard for the claims of a sound philosophy, while professional philosophers are equally culpable in ostracising faith. They are fellow-workers, and again we say, what God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

How beautifully has Wordsworth expressed the inner and united working of faith and reason:—

“I have seen

A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell;
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
Listened intensely; and his countenance soon
Brightened with joy; for from within were heard
Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea.
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. . . .

This is the genuine course, the aim and end
Of prescient reason; all conclusions else
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse.”

It has always appeared to me as a fundamental error in the Kantian philosophy, that rational laws can do efficient service and enlarge the field of knowledge only where such laws may be made sensuous. It is at this point that subjective Idealism finds one of its strongholds in a philosophical system that has in it so many elements of perpetuity. It is also one of the beaten highways upon which Rationalism has driven, to the great detriment of theoretical and practical Christianity. The laws of reason—in other words, the fundamental principles of science—all take hold upon the unseen, and the logical outcome of each and all should be the union of faith and reason in the highest type of man, the reverent and adoring Christian.

There are three grades of scientific knowledge—the empirical, the rational or noetic, and the theological. The first enquires after the fact, and errs (1) when the fact is taken as a finality declarative and confirmatory of nothing beyond itself, or (2) when it resolves every fact into mere mechanical and physical forces.

The second deals with mathematics and the philosophical sciences generally. Here the enquiry is for law, principles universal and absolute. Its error is twofold—(1) In giving existence to principles independent of some concrete reality, and (2) In mistaking what that reality is in which these principles finally centre.

In theology we stand face to face with the finality in all thought and investigation. This is the highest stage and culmination of knowledge. "The three grades are habitually designated as science, philoso-

phy, and theology, implying that the two latter are not science. There is a mighty power in words. And it is an unworthy artifice for the students of physical science to appropriate to their own branch of study the name science and to themselves the name scientists." "Knowledge in each of the three grades is science in the true sense of the word, and the exclusive appropriation of the word to empirical science is unjustifiable."—*Harris' Basis of Theism*.

We ought all to be familiar with the following statement from Aristotle: "There are three genera of the speculative sciences—the physical or natural, the mathematical, and the theological. . . . Of these sciences that one which is mentioned last of the three possesses the greatest amount of excellence, for it is conversant about that one amongst entities which is more entitled to respect than the rest. Each science, however, is termed more excellent, and more inferior, according to its appropriate object of scientific knowledge."—*Met., Bk. X., Cap. VII.*

It is a sad reflection upon the degeneracy and materialistic tendencies of our times when that which to a heathen Greek was the highest of all the sciences is now declared unworthy of the name, and must, forsooth, be but the *creed* of effeminate superstition. The true position is: Facts rests upon laws; laws are revealed to us through and by the operations of reason; these laws, these truths—

"Deathless flowers from Paradise transplanted"—

are discovered, not made, and they thus reveal themselves as the workings of an infinitely perfect, and in some way all-comprehending intelligence, called God. He is the ultimate cause of all intellectual, moral and spiritual phenomena, and these are a more sufficient basis for affirming *His* existence than physical phenomena are for that of *material* existence.

And so Plato says: "At the extreme limits of the intellectual world is the idea of the good, which is perceived with difficulty, but, in fine, cannot be perceived without concluding that it is the source of all that is beautiful and good; that in the visible world it produces light, and the star whence the light directly comes; that in the invisible world it directly produces truth and intelligence." Bacon says: "It is most wise soberly to render unto faith the things that are faith's." Here, as elsewhere, faith comes to supplement knowledge, when knowledge herself confesses that her own resources are exhausted, and that such aid is indispensable, and, let us add, perfectly rational. Without God as the finality, science is meaningless, philosophy is impossible, and knowledge vanishes as a dream. Deny to faith its right to supplement and complete knowledge, when reason transcends experience and carries us unerringly into the realm of the supersensible, and intellectual chaos is the result. All science thus rests upon faith, and all go to school to theology, carrying with them the hard questions and unsolved problems that, in the nature of things, could elsewhere find no solution.

What then is the province of faith ?

It affords an absolute and rational certainty of that to which no sensuous experience can attain. It teaches us that while faith is more extensive than knowledge, it is at the same time the basis of knowledge, and that the two are inseparably associated. It asserts the existence of God, without fully declaring all which that existence involves.

“Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.”

It carries the key that alone can open the portal leading to the solution of all mysteries and the dissipation of all error. It is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” It is reason giving assent to its own utterances, reaching far beyond the sphere of the bodily senses. It is reason looking from the standpoint of the wreck and ruin of the present, and, like

“The rainbow smiling on the faded storm,”

is prophetic of hushed tempests and cloudless skies.

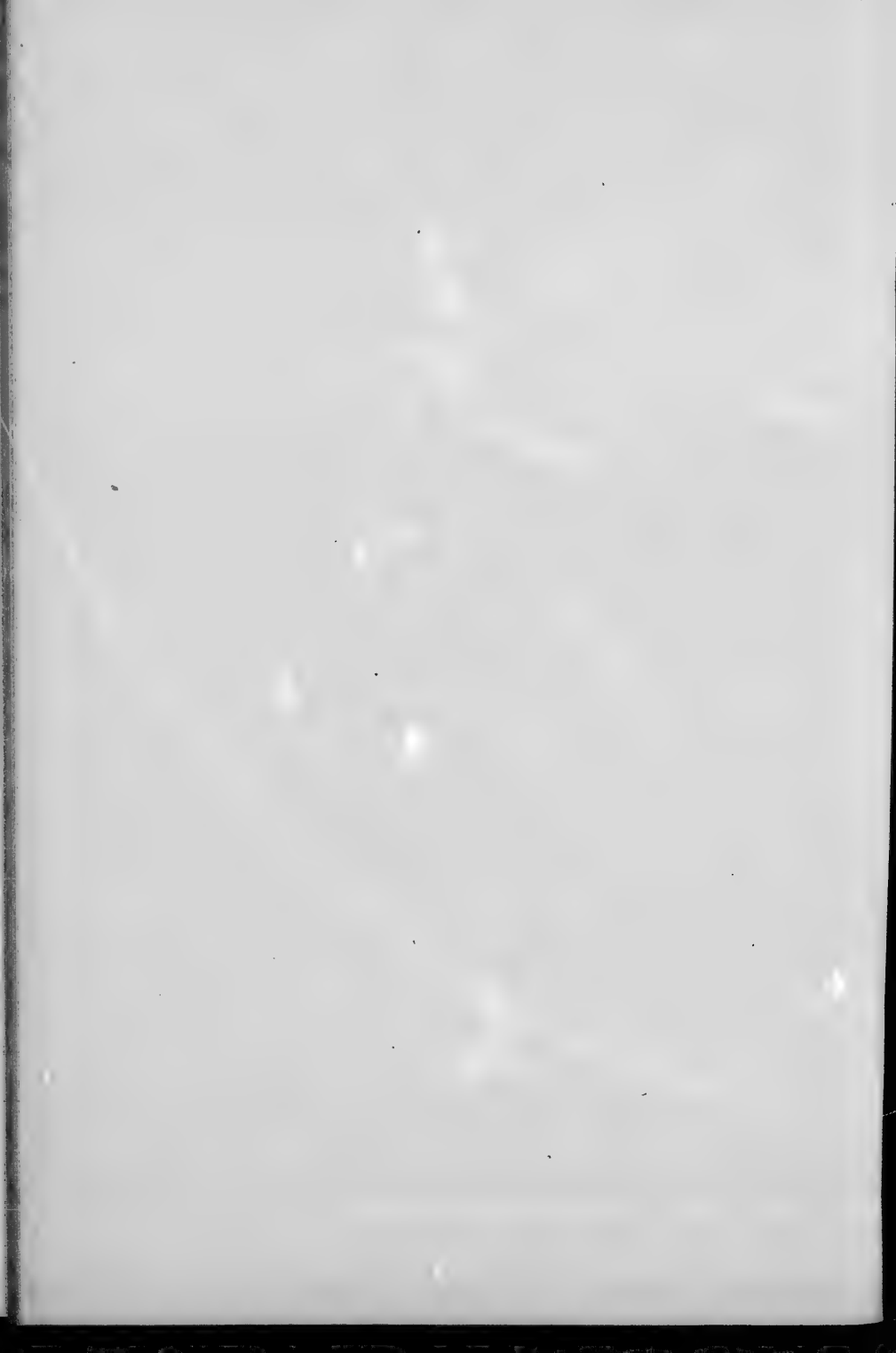


Christ, the Light of the World:

A SERMON DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MAY 8TH, 1887.

BY THE

REV. J. COOPER ANTLIFF, D.D.



Sermon.

CHRIST, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

"Then spake Jesus again to them, saying, I am the light of the world."—JOHN viii. 12.

It has been said by Tholuck, that "Christ everywhere derived the similitudes which He employed from something which met His eyes." Though this statement may be too general, yet it is evident that usually our Lord's metaphors were taken from objects just before Him, or from incidents that were transpiring or had recently transpired in His presence. Thus we find that it was shortly after a great multitude had been miraculously fed with five barley loaves and two fishes that Jesus said, "I am the bread of life;" and it was at the close of the Feast of Tabernacles, during which the priests had daily ascended Mount Zion with water in the sacred vessels from the stream of Siloam, which they poured amidst great rejoicings upon the great altar, that Jesus cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." The remarkable metaphor employed by our Lord in the passage now

selected as the basis of our meditations was doubtless suggested by something immediately before the eyes of Himself and His hearers, though there is some difference of opinion as to what this something was. Some maintain that as the words were spoken on the last great day of the feast, and in that part of the temple called the treasury, the reference is to the two huge candelabra which stood in this apartment, which were fifty cubits high and richly gilt, and which were surmounted by immense lamps that during the Feast of Tabernacles were lighted, and which illumined the temple and indeed the whole city with their brilliant light. Pointing to these candelabra, whose light was meant to remind the people of the shining pillar of fire, which led their fathers through the wilderness, our Lord declared, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." But others hold the opinion that as our Lord spoke these words early in the morning, when the rising sun was scattering the mists and filling the city and temple with effulgence, which was brilliantly reflected by the golden ornaments of the temple, the reference is to the orb of day, and that there is special beauty in the metaphor when it is remembered that ancient prophecy declared, "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." So far as the words themselves are concerned, the reference might be to either the golden lamps or to the golden sun, or indeed to both; but as the sun is the more majestic, and

perhaps significant figure, we prefer to suppose that our Lord had special reference to this when He declared, "I am the light of the world."

Let us then proceed to consider this august and comprehensive declaration, which, in passing, we may remark, gives incidental confirmation to the doctrine of our Lord's divinity; for apart from this doctrine it will be hard to reconcile it with the statement made on another occasion—"I am meek and lowly of heart;" but when we accept the doctrine that Christ was God as well as man, the two declarations are at once in harmony, as setting forth the two sides of His mysterious nature and person. In our text we are taught the great truth that Christ is the source of light to the moral and spiritual world; or in other words, the doctrine is set forth, that what the sun is to the physical world Christ is to the spiritual world.

Now, light very aptly is employed as an emblem of knowledge, of safety, and of joy, and we shall therefore endeavor to prove and illustrate—

I. THAT CHRIST IS THE GIVER OF KNOWLEDGE.

II. THAT HE IS THE AUTHOR OF SAFETY.

III. THAT HE IS THE SOURCE OF JOY.

I. We remark that Christ is the giver of knowledge.

In all nations light is employed as an emblem of knowledge and truth, while darkness is employed to represent ignorance and error; so that as the physical world is in darkness without the sun, the spiritual world is in darkness without Christ; for "that which doth make manifest is light." A very brief considera-

tion of the condition of men, apart from the revelation that Christ has imparted, will show how ignorant even the most learned men were about the most important matters that concern our race. While in the region of literary and intellectual scholarship they attained the very summit of excellence, in the region of the moral and spiritual they were

“Puzzled with mazes and perplexed with errors.”

Their need of a teacher from God becomes the more evident as we contemplate the disparity between their proficiency in worldly wisdom and their deficiency in heavenly wisdom: which shows that there is no necessary connection between science and sanctity, and genius and grace. And it may not be amiss to call attention, in passing, to the fact that in this nineteenth century the men who rank highest in science and art are not on that account to be regarded as oracles when they speak about morals and religion. Think of the marvellous attainments of those who lived before Christ, in literature, art and science, and then notice how foolish were their conceptions concerning divine and spiritual things. While illustrations might be drawn from Assyria, Egypt, and other famous lands of antiquity, we will look only at Greece, where intellect seemed to bear its richest fruitage. What do we find? In poetry, the dramas of Æschylus, Euripides and Sophocles, the comedies of Aristophanes, the lyrics of Sappho, the epics of Homer, are still read as models of strength and beauty. In eloquence, Demosthenes and

Æschines still captivate admiring students. In philosophy, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle rank as great schoolmasters of the world. In mathematics, the writings of Euclid are studied to-day in our highest seats of learning. In painting, Zeuxis and Parrhasius represent the highest style of art. In sculpture, the names of Phidias, Apelles and Praxiteles are household words; while in architecture, the names of some of the principal styles, as the Ionic, the Doric, and Corinthian, tell us how much we are still indebted to that classic land. But when we turn from these branches of mere human knowledge to those that concern man as a moral and spiritual being, we find ourselves taken out of warmth and sunshine into coldness and darkness that, like that of the Egyptian plague, may be felt: for "darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." It seems as if the Almighty permitted the greatest and grandest spirits the heathen world produced to fall into mistake and error, to show how utterly impotent human reason is to discover spiritual truth. This is seen—

1. In their conception of God. St. Paul, speaking on this subject, asks: "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? For in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. i. 20, 21). And again the same apostle writes: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things,

. . . and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator" (Rom. i. 22, 23, 25). The philosophers in some instances confounded God and nature, and in others set forth the Divine Being as an absolute and infinite Being, but without consciousness or without any interest in human affairs. In the classic poems, which enshrined the popular belief, the gods and goddesses were represented as guilty of flagrant sins. Contrast this with Christ's teaching, who declared, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Christ is the revealer, the illuminator, of God; for as St. John declares, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Christ meets man's yearning to see God, and the revelation is found both in the words and works of Christ. In the discourses of our Lord we find the spirituality of God and His tender compassion for men prominently declared. What a flood of light is poured on the nature and character of God in the Sermon on the Mount and our Lord's conversation with the woman of Samaria! But especially in Christ's works do we see the manifestation of God. We there see infinite power exerted to heal and comfort; Divine love is seen pouring itself upon the outcast and neglected; the tones of His voice are tremulous with heavenly pity, and the other attributes of God also manifest themselves in His gracious yet righteous dealings with men. He is the image of the invisible God. In Him we see, so to speak, God

translated into the common language of men, that He may be apprehended and appropriated. Just as the treasures locked up in an unknown tongue cannot be known until some scholar shall give a translation, so until God is incarnated we cannot see and know Him ; hence God became man, and in Christ's human life we learn what are God's thoughts and purposes concerning us. As Tennyson truly says :

“ Though truths in manhood darkly join,
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
We yield all blessing to the name
Of Him that made them current coin ;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
Where truth in closest words shall fail,
When truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In love'liness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought.”

In the epistle to the Hebrews a beautiful expression is employed to signify the body of Christ—the *veil* ; and such it was indeed. Man could not gaze on Deity without some intervening curtain, for the dazzling brightness would have blinded him ; and consequently Christ comes to us to show the Father, but with the brightness of the Godhead toned down and attempered to our vision by the incarnation. In reference, then, to the nature and character of God we understand more than the ancients ; not because our understanding

is stronger or our intuition clearer, but because we have the clear light of Christ's teachings, which illumines the subject as the orb of day in his full shining lights up and beautifies the otherwise dark and distant landscape.

2. Let us now contemplate the revelation Christ gives us concerning man; and that in reference, first to human duty, and then to human destiny.

(1) In the region of morals. One of the greatest of the sages of antiquity is said to have remarked, "We need a teacher from God." When we contemplate the moral character and teachings of the best men who were devoid of Christ's light, we shall discover how different were their conceptions of right and obligation to those now accepted as the purest and best. Moral qualities we esteem were in some cases unknown to them, and in other instances vices were exalted into the place of virtues. As instances of the former, *humility*, *humanity* and *virtue* may be mentioned. Every student of language knows these words had a meaning attached to them by the ancients very different to their present signification; for it is a noteworthy fact that Christianity had either to invent new terms or else employ old ones in a new sense. Max Müller says, "The very word 'humanity' was unknown before Christianity." As instances of vices being exalted into the position of virtues we may instance *revenge*, which that great philosopher Aristotle praises as a noble thing. *Pride* was counted as an honorable trait of character. *Suicide* was defended and even

practised by men ranking as most distinguished moral teachers. A striking feature of the ethics of the most cultured nations is that morality in its higher forms, as it is conceived by the best of the philosophers, was never considered as for the people at large, but only for the few; or to use a phrase now current—morality was for the classes and not for the masses. The universality of a high and noble morality appears never to have been entertained as a feasible or even desirable thing. The profoundest thinkers were most sadly conscious of the incompetence of their teachings to exalt the degraded and sinful populace; and a wail of despair like a sad undertone runs through their philosophings. Ultimately, as their history proves, the classic nations of antiquity were overwhelmed and destroyed by the flood of their moral corruptions; for in vain did their moralists exhort to justice and goodness when their system told of no high and adequate sanction to enforce the duties they set forth. Coleridge truly likened the light of ancient philosophy to that of the lantern-fly of the tropics moving in luminous specks on the face of the night—mere gleams and points, of no avail in the gloom around. When, however, we turn to the Divine teachings of our Lord we are at once in broad sunlight. Here we find the profoundest ethical needs of man satisfied; here beautiful theory is conjoined with holy practice, and Christ stands forth before the nations, after being gazed upon for eighteen hundred years, as the Teacher of whom all say, "Never man spake as this man," and of whose

moral character the record is still true, "We find no fault in Him." Those who reject Christianity are compelled to do homage at the shrine of Jesus of Nazareth, and, as is well known, some of the most glowing tributes to the matchless teachings of our Lord are from sceptics. Let us hear the testimony of one or two of them. Rousseau breaks out into the following impassioned language when contemplating Christ: "What sweetness, what purity in His manner! What an affecting gracefulness in His delivery! What sublimity in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His discourses! What presence of mind, what subtilty, what truth in His replies! How great His command over His passions! Where is the man—where the philosopher who could so live and so die without weakness and without ostentation? Where could Jesus learn, among His competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which He only hath given both precept and example?"

In the posthumous essays of John Stuart Mill we have the following glowing eulogy of Christ as a moralist: "About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight, which if we abandon the idle expectation of scientific precision, when something very different was aimed at, must place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in His inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with

the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy even for an unbeliever to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract to the concrete than to endeavor to live so that Christ would approve our life."

Renan says: "Jesus is the highest of the pillars that show to man whence he comes and whither he ought to tend. In Him is condensed all that is good and exalted in our nature."

In this connection also it is worth remarking that Auguste Comte, the high-priest and arch-apostle of that strange system called Positivism, is said by John Stuart Mill to have found his favorite study in Thomas à Kempis' "*De Imitatione Christi*."

The system of morals Christ taught stands without a compeer or even a rival, and the world is more attentively listening to His words of grace and wisdom as the centuries pass along.

(2) Let us pass on to glance at the light Christ has cast on the problem of human destiny.

St. Paul states that "Our Saviour Jesus Christ has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." Here again a comparison of the opinions of the most cultured of the heathen with the revelation afforded us by Christ will at once disclose the superiority of Christian doctrine. One

school of philosophers gave no hope of a future existence, another taught that the soul is material and mortal, and even amongst those teachers who seemed to have the clearest insight into the future there is vacillation and uncertainty. Turning to the popular theology as found in the poets, we find little to disarm death of its terrors. Read the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, which contains the account of the visit of Ulysses to the regions of departed spirits, and how sad and chilling are the descriptions of the abode, the condition and the employments of the departed! Then turn to our Saviour's words in the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel. What certainty, what warmth, what blessedness are enshrined in those inspiring and hope-giving words! These words have softened the pillows of myriads of dying saints, and enkindled triumphant hope in the bosoms of the stricken and bereaved. Yes, Christ draws aside the veil that hides the future from our eager eyes, and discloses entrancing visions of immortality for the good, and visions of remorse and pain for the finally impenitent. Apart from the clear and certain teachings of our Lord, the words are true—

“ And what am I ?

An infant crying in the night,

An infant crying for the light,

And with no language but a cry.”

But with the teachings of Christ falling on the mystery of the future life, we find the darkness dissipated; “for we know that if our earthly house of this taber-

nacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. v. 1).

In meditating on Christ's teachings concerning these subjects, do we not feel that the claim He makes in our text is fully justified by the facts, and that He is indeed the light of the world? Let us walk in this light; and while some shut themselves in the blackness of sheer unbelief, and others grope in the twilight of agnosticism, be it ours to open all the windows of intellect and heart to the sunlight of the sure word of Christ's teaching.

But light is also an emblem of safety, and we proceed to observe—

II. That Christ is the author of safety.

Darkness is a fitting symbol of danger and insecurity; hence we read: "The path of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble." A child seems instinctively to fear when alone in darkness. This state of trepidation, of fear, of insecurity, well sets forth the condition of men apart from Christ. Men naturally entertain a dread of God so long as He is unknown. The imagination pictures Him as mighty and terrible, as the Greek conceived Jupiter holding thunderbolts in his red right hand; and to the modern heathen, God is a dreadful king of furies, delighting in the cries of sacrificial victims. But, besides the element of ignorance, there is another potent ingredient that adds to man's sense of danger, and that is the consciousness of sin. Wherever un-

forgiven sin exists, the intuition we have of righteousness, together with the upbraidings of conscience, will cause alarm. The history of men of every age and clime, of every religion and stage of civilization, proves this position. When men begin to think they begin to fear. Now, Christ gives light concerning the mystery of sin and the greater mystery of pardon. From His lips we find no apology for sin; it is not an accident in the history of mankind; it is not merely a misfortune or a negative quality, nor a pardonable frailty, but it is something exceedingly evil. Indeed, only Christ's disciples have any conception of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin." So that Christ does not give security by blinding the eyes to the nature of evil, which is the fashion some would adopt. No; it stands forth in all its repulsive hideousness. It is seen to be an offence in the eyes and nostrils of God, and a curse and burden to man; but Christ shows how it may be pardoned, and how the soul may be cleansed from its guilt. There is a light streaming from the cross on this subject, and hence it is in the doctrine of Christ's atonement that we find a sense of security. We behold "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We learn that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." When these words enter into the heart troubled with the burning consciousness of guilt; when the weary soul rests on Christ's sacrifice and finds pardon, then the feeling of security springs

up in the heart, the darkness is past, and the glorious light fills the soul. "Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke i. 78-79). Let a man know—not merely hope, but absolutely know—that he is forgiven, and how safely he walks! He has the spirit of adoption pervading his heart. Both God's providence and God's grace conspire to bless him. With firm foot and a brave heart he walks through this present world. His triumphant song has become: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm xxvii. 1.) He can face hardship and trial fearlessly, for he is a son of God and can trust his Father to preserve him; and even in the prospect of death there is no trepidation, for he can exclaim confidently: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But we further observe that light is an emblem of joy; and we remark—

III. That Christ is the source of joy.

Darkness is the symbol of misery: hence we read of such as "sit in darkness and the shadow of death," and hell is spoken of as "outer darkness." It seems natural for darkness and gloom to depress the spirits

and for light and sunshine to exhilarate, and this is the reason that in Scripture light is so frequently employed to indicate comfort and joy. Hence we read of the "light of God's countenance," and the Psalmist says: "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart: rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous." Consider what is the state of mankind in regard to true joy apart from the Gospel of Christ. The records of history prove that whatever man's outward condition may be, unless there is inward peace and rest his life is one of misery. Let a man have all the world can give him apart from Christ, and his condition is miserable; so it is a true saying that the ancient systems of philosophy had their origin in despair. The incompetence of outward advantages to give joy finds a remarkable illustration in the experience of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, who lived when our Lord uttered our text. As is well known, he retired to a lovely isle in the Ægean Sea that he might the more fully surrender himself to sensual pleasures, and he gave himself up to a life of unrestrained indulgence and luxury. From that enchanting retreat he wrote these bitter words to his servile and corrupted Senate: "What to write, or what not to write, may all the gods and goddesses destroy me worse than I feel they are daily destroying me, if I know" (*Tac. Ann. VI.*); and Pliny speaks of him in these melancholy words: "Tristissimus ut constat hominum"—confessedly the most gloomy of men. The experience of an English nobleman in more recent times, as

famous for his vices as for his genius, affords a further illustration of the utter inability of outward circumstances to give joy to the soul. Contrast the experience of Tiberias in his retreat of pleasures with St. Paul singing in the inner prison at Philippi, while his unwashed wounds were still keenly smarting; and compare Byron's tragic words—

“My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers, the fruit of love, are gone;
The worm, the canker and the grief
Are mine alone.
The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle,”

with the words of John Wesley, “By the grace of God, I never fret, I repine at nothing, I am discontented with nothing. I see God sitting on His throne and ruling all things well.”

Christ to-day is like a great reservoir from which countless multitudes are drawing unspeakable joy. They rejoice in the Lord: they live a life of the highest type in Him, and gladly confess their dependence on Him for all they hold dearest. And as in the scientific world it is an accepted doctrine, that all our physical well-being is dependent on the sun, and that death will ensue on our ceasing to appropriate his imparted gifts, so in the realm of the spiritual world Christ is the source of all spiritual life and delights; and following Him who is the light of the world, we do not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

Christ is pre-eminently the Consoler, and the prophet Isaiah emphasizes this in that passage which afforded a text for Jesus in the synagogue of Nazareth, which amongst other words contains these, "He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort them that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isaiah lxi. 1-3). And this joy is meant for all. Jesus says, "I am the light of the *world*;" not for one country or age, but for all countries and all ages. When men create their lights, whether by gas or electricity or other means, they provide only for themselves and those about them; but when God says, "Let light be," the daylight comes flooding along o'er mountain and valley, o'er ocean and meadow, giving plenitude and splendor to cottage and mansion; and in the same manner Christ, the Sun in the spiritual firmament, sends forth light for prince and peasant, for literate and illiterate, and for young and old. The echoes of His birthday hymn still are melodiously vibrating—"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

If you would enjoy life, follow Christ: keep your face turned towards Him like that lovely flower, the heliotrope, keeps its face ever turned towards the sun and thus gets sweetness and beauty.

I have the joy this morning of speaking to many whose sacred duty it is to preach this Christ, and I

address others who entertain a holy and burning desire to have their life consecrated to this loved employ. I hail you, my brethren in the ministry, as sharers in the most delightful work in which a man can engage. We are stars in the right hand of our Master. Our light is borrowed from Him. We are called to reflect its effulgence, and as we go hither and thither holding forth the Word of Life, we might appropriately adopt as our motto the words engraved on a famous lighthouse on the English coast—"To give light to save life." Let us be careful to let the light shine fully on ignorant, endangered and miserable men. They need what we can give; they do not need literary essays nor philosophical disquisitions when they look up to us as we stand in our pulpits. Men are panting for the true light, and the cry of dying men is like the last words of Goethe, "More light." The gospel of Christ has not lost its power, and cannot be dispensed with in this age of scientific knowledge and invention. The most popular books to-day are those which tell the story of the life of Christ. The story of His life, His death, His teachings, has still a fascinating charm, and, as it has been truly said, "While man sins and suffers, while there is blood-tinged sweat upon his brow, while there is weeping in his home and anguish in his heart, that voice can never lose its music which brings forth the comfort and inspiration of the gospel, which tells the sin-tormented spirit the tale of the Infinite pity, and bids

it lay its sobbing wretchedness on the bosom of the Infinite love."

Finally, let me remind you all that shortly we shall go hence. But whither? If we have accepted the Divine Saviour we shall go to dwell in heaven, where the glowing prophecy shall have its perfect fulfilment: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." We shall pass out of the shadows into the city of which "God and the Lamb are the light thereof."



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 Foote, James G.
 Gee, A. L.
 Goodwin, James.
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 Hazlewood, J. H.
 Hobbs, Richard.
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 Holden, S. W.
 Hooker, Le Roy.
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 Kay, John.
 Kearns, D.
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Laird, James.
 Lanceley, John E.
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 Livingston, H. G.
 Maitland, Robert R.
 Maxwell, William J.
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 Mitchell, George A., B.A.
 Mooney, James.
 Moore, T. A.
 Morrow, Charles R.
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* Deceased.

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 Rev. C. Teeter.
 Rev. A. E. Smith.
 Rev. John Weir.

* Deceased.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1886-87.

Receipts.

Balance in hand as per last account	\$330 05
London Conference Branch	23 50
Niagara Conference Branch	21 50
Guelph Conference Branch	32 00
Toronto Conference Branch	20 00
Bay of Quinte Conference Branch	19 00
Montreal Conference Branch	13 00
Manitoba Conference BranchNo returns.	
Total	\$459 05

Expenditure.

Book Room Account, 1885-86	\$161 76
Rev. E. B. Harper, Expenses as Preacher, 1886 ..	12 40
Secretary-Treasurer, Expenses at Annual Meeting	6 77
Postal and Express Charges and Telegrams	1 40
	\$182 33
Balance on hand	276 72
Total	\$459 05

Liabilities.

Book Room Account, 1886-87	\$277 18
Secretary-Treasurer, Expenses at Annual Meeting	13 75
Total	\$290 93
Balance of Liabilities over Assets	\$14 21

N.B.—The privileges of membership are conditioned upon enrolment, and the payment of an annual fee of \$1. All who pay the membership fee are entitled to a copy of the "Annual Lecture and Sermon" and the "Lectures on Preaching." Annual Fees paid in the "Jackson" and "Douglas" Societies are accepted in lieu of the Annual Fee of the "Union," and entitle the members to all the privileges of membership.

COURSE OF READING FOR FELLOW IN THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE (F.T.L.).

The Course of Reading is to extend over three years and to consist of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, or Apologetic studies. The character of the Course shall be optional, *i.e.*, the subjects or branches of study may be elected by each one reading; *Provided*, that two subjects shall be read for each year, one to be selected at the beginning of the Course and continued throughout, and the other varied from year to year. The thoroughness of the reading will be tested by a thesis on each subject, of a minimum length of at least twelve octavo pages of 250 words each, to be assigned by the first of February and forwarded by the first of April to the Examiners; a written report of the examination of the thesis to be in the hands of the Secretary by the first of May, who shall report results to the candidates. All persons reading must send application for subject of thesis to the Secretary by the first of January, stating the year in which they are reading, the Course subject, the option selected, and the books read. Each subject should be studied in at least two authors, from a comparison of which an independent opinion may be formed; and a student must put in at least one thesis each year until the Course is completed.

COURSE OF STUDY.

FIRST YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—St. John's Gospel. Aids: Godet, Meyer, Moulton, and Milligan.
2. *Historical Study*.—The Christian Church to the close of the Council of Nice. Text-books: Neander and Schaff.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Atonement. Text-books: Crawford, Randles, Miley.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—Natural Theology. Text-books: Flint's Theism and Anti-Theistic Theories, Diman's Theistic Argument, and Janet's Final Causes.

SECOND YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Epistle to the Romans. Aids: Godet, Meyer, and Beet.
2. *Historical Study*.—The English Reformation. Text-books: Burnet, D'Aubigne, and Hardwicke.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Trinity. Text-books: Bull's Defence of the Nicene Faith, Dorner's Person of Christ.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—The Canon of the New Testament. Text-books: Westcott, Briggs' Biblical Study, Sanday's Gospels in the Second Century.

THIRD YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—Isaiah. Aids: Cheyne and Lange.
2. *Historical Study*.—American Church History. Text-books: Stevens' and Bangs' American Methodism, Punchard's Congregationalism.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Future Life. Text-books: Beecher's History of the Doctrine, Randles, Shaw's Lecture on Eternal Punishment.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—Inspiration. Text-books: Bannermann, Lee, Elliott, Pope's Theology, Vol. I.